



# The Shadow of the Sheltering Pines

by GRACE MILLER WHITE

A New Romance of the Storm Country

## SYNOPSIS.

**CHAPTER I.**—Lonely and almost friendless, Tonibel Devon, living on a canal boat, child of a brutal father and a worn-out, discouraged mother, wanders into a Salvation army hall at Ithaca, N. Y. There she meets a young Salvation army captain, Philip MacCauley.

**CHAPTER II.**—Uriah Devon, Tony's father, returns to the boat from a protracted "spree," and announces he has arranged for Tony to marry a worthless companion of his, Reginald Brown. Mrs. Devon objects, and Uriah beats her. She intimates there is a secret connected with Tonibel.

**CHAPTER III.**—In clothes that Uriah has brought Tony finds a baby's picture with a notification of a reward for its return to a Doctor Pendlehaven. She goes to return the picture.

**CHAPTER IV.**—With the Pendlehavens, a family of wealth, live Mrs. Curtis, a cousin, her son and daughter, Katherine Curtis and Reginald Brown. Katherine is deeply in love with Philip MacCauley.

**CHAPTER V.**—Tonibel returns the picture to Doctor John, and learns it belongs to his brother, Dr. Paul Pendlehaven. It is a portrait of Doctor Paul's child, who had been stolen in her infancy, and her loss has wrecked Doctor Paul's life. Doctor John goes with Tony to the canal boat and misters to Mrs. Devon while she is unconscious.

**CHAPTER VI.**—Returning to consciousness, Mrs. Devon is informed by Tony of her visitor. She is deeply agitated, makes Tony swear she will never tell of her brutality, and disappears.

**CHAPTER VII.**—Tony's personality and her loneliness appeal to Doctor John and he arranges to take her into his house as a companion to his invalid brother.

"For heaven's sake, what's the matter?" asked the girl.

"I think your Cousin John's gone mad," said Mrs. Curtis, beginning to cry. "He's brought a ragged girl into the house to stay, a girl with bare feet, and enough hair for three people. From what I could gather she's going to stay over with Paul. And John insisted on my going with him to buy these. Think of a poor nobody dressed up like a horse."

Katherine looked at her keenly. "I suppose you served Cousin John a deep-seated spell of hysterics, didn't you, when he popped the girl in on you?" she demanded.

"I did my best," admitted Mrs. Curtis, sniffing.

"Men get surfeited to women's tears, mamma darling," said the all-wise Katherine. "If I wanted to make any impression on him, I'd leave off howling every minute or two. And you don't look pretty when your nose is red. Who is the gutter rat?"

"I'm sure I don't know. She's got a queer name, and I asked her about herself, and she looked as sulky as could be."

"Leave it to me—" began Katherine. Just then the door swung open, and there appeared before Katherine Curtis a girl who made her breath almost stop with surprise. A very young girl, too, the gazer caught at a glance. Abundant curls hung about one of the most beautiful faces Katherine had ever seen. Her mother hadn't told her the girl was so pretty. She felt a nervousness come over her when she thought of Philip MacCauley.

In silence Tonibel donned her new clothes, and when she stood up to be inspected, Mrs. Curtis scowled at her. "Go show Doctor John," she said. "He told me to send you right down to him."

Tonibel was glad to escape. Katherine hadn't said a word to her, but both girls had eyed each other appraisingly, and Katherine suddenly came to a resolution, which she made known to her mother the moment they were alone.

"She can't stay in this house," she said between her teeth.

Mrs. Curtis laughed sarcastically. "See what you can do with your cousin, then," she snapped. "I did my best with John, and he positively refused to let me go to Paul! As much as told me it was none of my business."

"I won't cry when I talk to him," said the girl. "I'll speak my mind outright. I'll make the house too hot to hold her. I think I know how to put one over on our philanthropic cousins."

When Tonibel came into the office that evening to ask a very important question of Doctor Pendlehaven, he said to her:

"My dear, I want you always to remember what I am going to tell you now. This house belongs to my brother and me. I do not wish you to take orders from anyone but us."

Tony gazed at him a moment, not understanding at first. Then her lips widened.

"That means if anyone says I've got to hike back to the canal boat, I don't go unless one of you tells me to," she demanded. "Is that it?"

The doctor laughed. "Yes, that's it," said he. "Now what did you want of me?"

"Can I go down the lake tomorrow afternoon?" she hesitated and then went on, "I want to see if anyone's home."

"Certainly, dear child, you can," was the answer. "But get back before it's dark; I don't want anything to happen to my little Tony Girl."

## CHAPTER VIII.

### The Fight.

Little by little Paul Pendlehaven taught her, and little by little Tony's salvation boy preached his lessons of Universal Love to her; and the eager young mind drank in the knowledge as a thirsty plant takes in water.

There were no signs of Uriah and Edith returning, and Tonibel grew daily more hopeless when she thought of her mother. Perhaps she would never see her again. She had strenuously refused to speak of her people to Paul Pendlehaven.

Doctor John noticed as the days passed how much better his brother was looking, and no wonder his own heart warmed hourly to the curly-headed waif who had come among them so mysteriously.

Unknown to either of the doctors, Mrs. Curtis and her daughter had been able to keep Tony Devon from meeting Philip MacCauley in the house. At first John Pendlehaven had insisted that Tony attend the family table, but both Paul and the girl decided that her meals should be served in the sick room. Perhaps if Philip MacCauley hadn't been interested in a certain little girl on a canal boat, his curiosity would have taken him to Paul's apartments to make the acquaintance of the little companion John Pendlehaven had casually spoken of.

"She's a wonder, Phil," he said one evening. "For the first time I've hopes of Paul's recovery."

"Good!" replied Philip, and immediately fell into a reverie.

Tonibel had reached the canal boat and had changed to her old clothes when suddenly she heard footsteps on the path beside the Hoghole. Her heart almost leapt out of her mouth. Perhaps her mother was coming home, perhaps her father. Tremblingly she peeped out through the aperture. She drew back instantly. Reginald Brown was approaching the canal boat. She heard him cross the deck, and then the footsteps ceased. She hoped with all her might and main that he wouldn't think of coming downstairs.

But that was exactly what he did do. She crouched up against the bunk, as the boy stepped into the cabin. When he saw her a slow grin spread over his thin face.

"So you're here," he got out thickly. "Where have you been? I've visited this place three times in that many weeks. Where have you been, I say?"

"Go away," she said, half frightened to death. "You'd better get out of here before my mother comes back. She'll beat you with the broom!"

"I'm not afraid of your father or mother," he said tauntingly. "I know where they are."

The words sent Tonibel forward a step.

"Honest?" she gasped. "Is it honest what you say?"

"Certainly," replied the young man, "and they told me to come here and get you."

"Where are they?" She had come very near him now, her eyes gazing at him wistfully. "Please tell me where my mummy is!"

"Never mind just now," said he, his eyes taking in her slight young figure passionately. "Here, I want to kiss you."

He dragged her forward until her slender, quivering body was pressed against his. He had said he intended to kiss her. All the rebellion of a primitive uneducated nature sprang into life within Tony Devon. The curly head darted upward for a moment, and the gray eyes blazed into the muddy blue ones, leering down upon her. Then, knowing no other way to protect herself from desecration, she set her sharp white teeth into Reggie's hand, sinking them deep beneath his skin. A cry of hurt rage escaped his lips, and he flung her from him.

"You little vixen," he got out, shaking his hand in panic. "You little wicked brat! There! Now I'll teach you to bite me again!"

He sprang at her, and Tony screamed twice with all her lung power. Then something happened! Someone grasped hold of the man who had snatched her into his arms, and for what seemed an interminable time two forms struggled together in the small cabin. For a few seconds Tony didn't realize who Reggie's assailant was; then with a grip at her heart she recognized Philip's white face as with terrible strength he dragged Reggie up the steps.

Into her terrified eyes came one strange flashing smile of welcome. Her salvation man had saved her, and as every woman does in cases where her need is great, she cried out her thanksgiving in his name, that best-

beloved name of Philip. By this time the two men were struggling on the deck, and as if impelled by some unknown force Tony staggered up the steps.

It was just as she reached the top that she saw Captain MacCauley, by one mighty effort, lift the struggling figure of the other man and throw him into the lake. A sharp ejaculation fell from her lips. Never had she seen



Never Had She Seen Such Strength.

such strength, never had her heart sung as it did then. She trembled so that when Philip swung back and rushed toward her, she sank down at his feet. As falls away an old garment so fell away Philip's anger. Tenderly he lifted her up and spoke to her.

"Poor little girl," he whispered. But he had no time to add anything, nor had Tony time to answer him.

For there on the Hoghole path looking at her, a frown dragging his brows together, was her father.

Uriah Devon had halted at the sight of a man being thrown into the water. Then he came forward, and the girl loosened herself from the arms that held her and turned swiftly to him.

"Where's mummy?" she demanded, and again came a sharper "Where's my mother?" Roughly shoving her aside, Uriah walked across the boat deck, his sunken eyes fixed on MacCauley.

"What you mussin' about my boat for, mister?" he demanded. "And what happened to that young feller crawlin' to the beach there?"

"I elung him in the lake," said Philip fiercely. "The pup was—was—" he made a gesture toward Tony as Devon's interruption belched forth:

"Was it any of your business what happened to my girl?"

Uriah took another step toward the young captain.

"That's your canoe, ain't it, roped to my dock?" he demanded fiercely. "Well, hop in and get away if you don't want a broken skull!"

Philip sent a flashing glance to the silent, white girl. There was such terror marked on her face that his teeth came together tensely.

"He can't go till my mother comes," she broke out abruptly. "I won't stay if he don't."

Uriah's hand went back to his hip. "I guess he'll go if I tell 'im to," said he. "Just hop into your boat, kid, before I fill you up to your teeth with little bits of hot lead."

Tonibel had witnessed scenes like this before. She knew but a tiny pressure of her father's finger on the gun he held would kill her sweetheart.

"Go along," she managed to get out between her chattering teeth. "It'll be worse for both of us if you don't!"

Devon was forcing Philip backward toward the end of the dock, and by this time Reginald had crawled to the shore and had laid down upon it.

"Don't lag, mister," cried Tony to Philip. "Go along to Ithaca."

MacCauley stepped into his canoe, and Devon sullenly unfastened the rope and threw it into the bow of the craft.

"Don't come back here if you don't want a taste of this," he snapped, touching his gun. "Get out and stay out, mister."

With the end of the revolver he gave the canoe a shove, and Tony saw the paddle dip into the water and the boy move away.

Uriah stood a moment and looked off to the hills. Then locking Tony in the cabin he went to where Reggie lay on the shore and helped him back to the boat.

## CHAPTER IX.

### The Face in the Window.

By ten o'clock a heavy rain and wind had settled over the Storm Country with such force that the waves were rolling southward like ivory-crested mountains. Once in a while a heavy thud of thunder reverberated over the lake from the north, losing its roar back of the Cornell buildings on the university campus.

Devon's canal boat was following the little tug which was hugging the western shore northward. Tonibel, in the little room back of the cabin, was searching through the darkness from the small window. But the only thing she could see was the dark bank along which they crept and which once in a while was lit up by a vivid streak of lightning.

Suddenly the engine stopped, and as if she imagined Gussie could help her she gathered her into her arms.

In a vivid streak of lightning she saw they were anchored close to Crowbar point, which protected them somewhat from the wind. She

Continued on Page 3.

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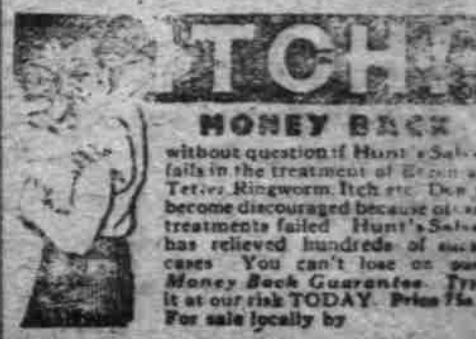
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